

## Message Text

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FOR EUR/NE AND HA

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SUBJECT: 1978 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

REF: STATE 207310

1. NORWAY IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S WEALTHIEST (IN PER CAPITA INCOME) AND MOST PROGRESSIVE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES. ITS SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM AND MILITANT CONCERN FOR THE PERSONAL RIGHTS OF ITS CITIZENRY MAKE IT A PARAGON WORTHY OF EMULATION BY LESS ENLIGHTENED NATIONS. ITS 14,250 FOREIGN WORKERS (OUT OF A 2.2 MILLION WORKFORCE) ENJOY COMPLETE LEGAL PROTECTION EQUAL TO THAT ENJOYED BY THE NORWEGIANS THEMSELVES. NORWAY'S SMALL PRISON SYSTEM IS A MODEL OF ADVANCED PENOLOGY WITH EMPHASIS ON HUMANE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION RATHER THAN ON PUNISHMENT. EMBOFFS WHO HAVE VISITED AMCIT PRISONERS (THERE IS ONE IN NORWAY AT PRESENT) INVARIABLY COME AWAY GREATLY IMPRESSED BY THE PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND THE HIGH QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PRISON STAFF MEMBERS (EVEN JUNIOR GUARDS MUST PASS A SPECIAL EXAMINATION AND TAKE PSYCHOLOGY COURSES TO OBTAIN POSITIONS).

2. WOMEN OCCUPY A VERY PROMINENT POSITION IN NORWEGIAN  
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SOCIETY (40 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE) AND ARE TOTALLY INTEGRATED INTO THE POLITICAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL HEIRARCHY WHERE THEY EXERCISE CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE (FOUR CABINET MEMBERS--OUT OF 16--; VICE CHAIRMAN--AND POSSIBLY NEXT PRIME MINISTER--OF THE RULING LABOR PARTY AND 42 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OUT OF 155.)

3. THE DISTAFF POSITION IN THE NORWEGIAN BUSINESS SECTOR IS NOT AS ADVANCED AS IT IS IN THE POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENT COMMUNITIES. AT PRESENT, THERE ARE VIRTUALLY NO WOMEN IN TOP POSITIONS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE THEY BREAK INTO THE EXECUTIVE BOARDROOMS HERE. WOMEN ARE ONLY SLOWLY ENTERING THE RANKS OF MIDDLE-MANAGEMENT, AND ARE ONLY NOW BEGINNING TO TAKE DEGREES IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION. WOMEN ECONOMISTS TEND TO FIND EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR. THERE EXISTS LITTLE PUBLIC PRESSURE UPON PRIVATE FIRMS TO HIRE WOMEN, AND THE BELIEF THAT "BUSINESS IS A MAN'S WORLD" IS FAIRLY WELL ENTRENCHED HERE.

4. INTERNATIONALLY, NORWAY TREATS HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS BECAUSE EACH PRESENTS THE GON WITH DIFFERENT POLICY DEMANDS THAT COULD LEAD TO DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS RE COMPARATIVE DESIRABILITY OF EXTENDED REACTION AGAINST THE OFFENDING NATION VERSUS MAINTENANCE OF TIES WITH IT (A CASE IN POINT WAS NORWAY'S REACTION IN THE CZECH CHARTER 77 CASE WHICH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FRYDENLUND TOLD EMBOFF REPRESENTED AN OVERREACTION). THE GOVERNMENT PREPARED A WHITE PAPER ON HUMAN RIGHTS RECOMMENDING GREATER NORWEGIAN INVOLVEMENT IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD, WHICH WAS ENDORSED BY THE PARLIAMENT.

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5. IN SHORT, NORWAY IS AN ACTIVE DEFENDER OF INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD. FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS ARE FULLY RESPECTED IN THIS SOPHISTICATED, COMPASSIONATE SCANDINAVIAN DEMOCRACY, A FACT WHICH IS PROMINENTLY MANIFESTED IN NORWEGIAN FOREIGN POLICY. BECAUSE OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS, NORWAY RESPONDED VERY POSITIVELY TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICIES IN THE AREA WHICH THEY FULLY CONCUR IN AND SUPPORT.

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